THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (c) For different categories of Defence and Civil employees different authorities have been authorised for sanctioning normal retirement pension as well as disability pension. The authorities are required to settle retirement as well as disability pension claims within specified time limits prescribed for the purpose. Heads of Departments/offices have been made accountable to ensure strict adherence of the prescribed time limits. As the dissatisfied pensioners made representations to number of authorities simultaneously and there is no centralised system for monitoring settlement of pension claims, it is not possible to indicate the number of cases where pension claims could not be settled in time. The Department of Pension and Pensioners Welfare, however, during the year 1993, received 9,893 complaints relating to various grievences of pensioners. Institutional arrangements have been made for the redressal of pensioners grievances Different Ministries/Departments also hold Pension Adalats for redressal of Pensions' grievances from time to time. The work relating to sanction of pension to Defence pensioners has been fully computerised.

Steps to counter supply of F-16 to Pakistan

5902. SHRI M. A. BABY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state the steps bieng considered by Government to counter the new changes in the security environment in the Subcontient following the decision of the USA to supply F 16 combat aircrafts to Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): The Government is closely monitoring the matter concerning supply of F-16 aircrafts to Pakistan and appropriate steps are being taken to counter the threat.

Crashes involving IAF aircraft

5903. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:
SHRI SOM PAL:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report under the caption "Crashes raise doubts on IAF training standards" published in the 'Indian Express' dated 6th March, 1994;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto;

(c) what are the details of crashes and IAF aircraft involving during the past three years;

(d) how doe our air force compare in this matter with other countries of the World;

(e) whether some corrective steps are being contemplated in this regard; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The training standards of the Indian Air Force (IAF) are comparable to any modern Air Force of the world. The training syllabi, skills of flying supervisors and maintenance are revieived as an on-going process.

Year	No. of IAF air crashes	Aircraft involved in air crashes
1991-92	32	32
1992-93	22	23
1993-94	22	22

(d) Due to non availability of correct and complete statistics relating to number of accidents and the accident rates of the Air Forces of other countries, it is not possible to assess the comparative performance of the IAF with other Air Forces with reference to flight safety.

(e) The following corrective steps have been taken by the IAF to prevent|minimise air accidents:—

(a) Every accident is investigated by a Court of Inquiry comprising specialists from Air Force, HAL, DTD&P (Air) and D(Aero) and recommendations made by the Court are implemented. High level investigation teams and studies are also ordered whenever an adverse trend or weak area is noticed.

(b) In addition, as an on-going process, the following steps are taken:—

(i) Review of all operational flying training syllabi

(ii) Check of flying skill|ability of all flying supervisors.

(iii) Inspection of all flying units|wings associated with flying|maintenance on regular basis.

(iv) Restreaming of pilots from fighter stream to transport|helicopter stream if they are found unsuitable for fighter air craft.

(v) Action against the defaulters.

(f) Does not arise.

Global tenders for selling of IAF equipment

5904. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:
DR. BAPU KALDATE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have invited global tenders to sell certain Indian Air Force equipment;

(b) whether it is also a fact that certain items listed for sale are unused and that selling of certain equipment would be a policy violation of not exporting missile technology; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons for selling of IAF sensitive equipment with dangers of its falling into the hands of unfriendly countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Only surplus, unserviceable and obsolete Air Force equipments are offered for disposal. Disposal is only through the Special Surplus Stores Disposal Committee set up by the Ministry of Defence. The missiles which have been offered for disposal are obsolete with out-dated technology. All sales of such Defence equipment to other countries is regulated as per laid down policy of the Government.

Acquisition of new battle tank

5905. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the PRIME MINISER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item published in the 'Asian Age' of 15th April, 1994 under the caption "A split in the Army stalls new battle tank"; and

(b) if so what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The aspersion cast in the news-report is not correct. On the basis of excellent performance demonstrated by the indigenous main battle tank ARJUN during the trials, the Army